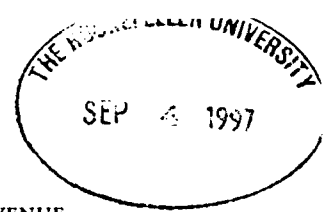


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28 August 1997

Prof. Joshua Lederberg
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Dear Dr. Lederberg:

Thanks for emailing me your editorial introduction from the 6 August 97 issue of JAMA on BW which you edited. I don't subscribe to JAMA (Science is the closest to it that my subscriptions get) so I had not been aware that an issue had been devoted to this biopolitical topic. I assume that the JAMA readership explains why you stressed BW to the exclusion of comparable terrors. Perhaps to promote strategic planning that could guide programmatic allocation of resources, one should construct a terror x terrorists, column x row, matrix (my heuristic #I-28). The column terrors would be BW, nuclear bombs, chemical warfare, conventional missiles, land mines, bombs, automatic firearms, etc. The row perpetrators might include superpower(s), rogue states, crazy "cults," zealots like suicide bombers, loners, etc. Each cell would be filled in by "What is to be Done" policies and procedure for defense against the column terror by the row perpetrators. Should terrors be added (e.g., epidemics) that may strike without direct human perpetrators?

You raise the question of whether we share frames of reference, mentioning as an example Jervis's approach to studying misperceptions in national and international politics. In a 1993 book, Explorations in political psychology, Duke University Press, that Shanto Iyengar and I edited to bring together recent advances in the area, we gave sympathetic coverage of this topic of how international decision makers and gate keepers use these cognitive distortions which usually cut costs adaptively (or else what is evolution for?) but occasionally are disastrous. Jervis and also Popkin and Tetlock contributed chapters on this cost/effective (mis)perception topic; each of the three contributed useful summaries of work in their areas, convenient for the busy executive. While your thinking may focus on influencing the classes (e.g., political leaders), I have focused more on the masses (e.g., trying to penetrate the ordinary person's misperceptions and motivational deficits to inducing him or her to adopt more healthful lifestyles. Usually my target behaviors are more dramatic than the simple hygienic behavior that you mention in your email. I enclose a reprint from Preventive Medicine (1984) that identifies the problem level at which I aim.

13:299-319

If scientists let Marx's gibe prod them to want not only to describe the world but to change it, then we must ask how the public, and especially how leaders, could be trained not to misuse these cognitive heuristic shortcuts. The answer is not easy. It would be hard enough if we had only to train people not to use these misperceptive approximations; what makes it even harder is that we must teach people when and how to use them and when to avoid them.

On training, your email raises the question of how to reinforce moral values that may so far have contributed to restraining terrors like biological warfare. It may be necessary to rely on correlational studies to estimate how big a role personal values have played in restraining (or, indeed, aggravating) such atrocities, as compared with the restraining roles of institutions, community, opportunity, etc. If moral values have played an appreciable role, which are the crucial values? How could training inculcate such values? To my knowledge, the

current state of the question focuses mainly on what are an inclusive spectrum or tree-diagram of human values? Once an efficient set of values have been identified (as by multivariate analysis) a next step could be to determine which of them can be shown (by cross-personal, cross-national, cross-era analysis) to be associated with BW-type atrocities. (For a methodological demonstration of an analogous cross-national study of crime see Dane Aiken & R. Gartner (1984) Violence and crime in cross-national perspective, Yale University Press.)

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For a review of measuring scales purported to tour the horizon as regards human values, see the chapter by V.A. Braithewaite and W.A. Scott (1991), "Values," in J.P. Robinson et al. (Eds.), Measures of personality and social psychology attitudes, NY: Academic Press. Only Rokeach's instrument, measuring 16 terminal and 16 instrumental values, has been used to collect good normative national data on values of the U.S. population and his norms are from 1972; it cries for replication now, 25 years after. More recently James D. Hunter and C. Bowman (1996) published relevant value norms in State of Disunion: 1996 survey of American political culture, U. Virginia Press. For cross-national norms, Willem Doise of the University of Genève has done a study of differences among 20-plus countries on how they rate a large set of human rights; his report is currently under review in a European journal.

Sincerely,

Bill McGuire

William J. McGuire

Encl Prevent. Med 1984
Worksheet Aug 1997